

	SOCIAL MEDIA USE POLICY	Operations Order 4.7.02
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1. POLICY STATEMENT

- A. Social media provides a potentially valuable means of assisting the Department and its employees in meeting community outreach, problem-solving, investigations, crime prevention, and related objectives.
- (1) The Department endorses the secure use of social media to:
- Enhance communication, collaboration, and information exchange
 - Streamline processes
 - Foster productivity
- B. The Department's use of social media may be explored or expanded upon as deemed reasonable by administrative and supervisory personnel.
- C. The City also recognizes the role social media plays in the personal lives of some department employees; however, employees are cautioned their speech and related activity on social media may be considered a reflection upon their position, and, in some instances, the Department (see section 9 of this order for guidelines on the personal use of social media).

2. PURPOSE

- A. This policy establishes the Department's position on the utility and management of social media and provides guidance on its management, administration, and oversight.

3. SCOPE

- A. This policy applies to ALL employees of the Department. All employees are also expected to comply with the City's rules and [Administrative Regulations \(ARs\)](#) related to the use of social media, including [AR 2.38, Social Media and Networking](#).
- Exceptions are listed in following sections of this order and are in relation to an employee's official duties pertaining to social media use as a promotional or investigative tool.
- B. The Department reserves the right to inspect, to the extent necessary, any and all files and data stored in any area of the City's network, on City owned or leased computers, on City phones, or any other City devices.
- (1) The Department also reserves the right to inspect all personally owned devices used to conduct City business; when information stored on the device may be relevant to an administrative investigation; and when it is necessary to secure the information for purposes of litigation or to defend claims made against the City.
- (a) Employees shall allow inspection of any such devices by the appropriate City authority upon request.

NOTE: Failure to allow inspections may be grounds for disciplinary action, up to, and including termination (refer to [AR 1.63, Electronic Communications and Internet Acceptable Use](#), for more information and Personnel Rule 21b16, which requires employees to participate in administrative investigations).

- C. Employees found to be in violation of this policy or the City's ARs will be subject to the appropriate disciplinary action, up to, and including, termination.

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4. GENERAL GUIDELINES

A. Authorization for Department Related Social Media Usage

- (1) The Public Affairs Bureau (PAB) Administrator or authorized designee is the approving authority for all social media use which officially represents the Department and employees in their official capacity.
- (2) The Department will have one social media account per platform (i.e. Facebook will have only one account).
 - (a) The City's Public Information director must approve any new social media pages prior to their creation.
 - The request will be made to the PAB Administrator or authorized designee through the chain of command.
- (3) Requests for social media access shall be submitted to the PAB Administrator or authorized designee through the chain of command.

B. Official Social Media Designees

- (1) PAB personnel (to include the Media Relations Unit and Web Media Detail), as assigned by the PAB Administrator or authorized designee, are the official social media designees.
- (2) Upon approval from their Division Chief, precinct/bureau commanders may designate personnel as social media representatives for the precinct/bureau who may utilize those social media outlets previously approved by the PAB Administrator or authorized designee.
- (3) Employees representing the Department via social media outlets shall:
 - Always conduct themselves as representatives of the Department, adhere to all Department and City standards of conduct and observe conventionally accepted protocols and proper decorum.
 - Maintain a professional and dignified demeanor expected of employees of the Department in their posts, comments, shared files, videos, graphics, and/or photographs.
 - Identify themselves as a member of the Department.
 - * Posts and comments should not be made as if they are from members of the community.
 - Not make statements about the guilt or innocence of any victim, witness, suspect, or arrestee.
 - Not make comments concerning pending prosecutions.
 - Not post, transmit, or otherwise disseminate confidential information, including photographs or videos.
 - Not comment upon Department training, activities, or work-related assignments without express written permission.
 - Not engage in any political activities or private business.
 - Not make critical or disparaging comments about the Department or Department policies, activities, or personnel.
 - Not make any comments concerning any civil or criminal cases in which the employee is or will reasonably be a witness.
 - Respect the copyrights, trademarks, service marks and intellectual property of others.
 - Comply with City ARs
 - Comply with [Operations Order 5.3.00, Computers](#).

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4. B. (4) Any Department authorized use of social media must be performed during normal working hours unless authorized by the designee's chain of command.
 - (a) Overtime is not approved for social media unless prior approval has been granted by the designee's chain of command.
 - (b) Designees may not engage in official use of social media on personal time, even when related to the Department; any such use is not authorized for overtime.
- C. Web postings containing proprietary images or materials belonging to the City or the Department are prohibited except where authorized by official designees of the Department or City. This includes but is not limited to the following:
 - The City trademark (City bird)
 - Department trademarks (PHXPD logo, badge, and shoulder patches) in graphic or physical form
 - Web site banners or graphics from official City or Department web sites
- D. The Department strategy for using social media should promote the Department and its interests.
 - (1) Each social media page shall include an introductory statement clearly specifying the purpose and scope of the agency's presence on the website.
 - (2) If possible, the page/s shall link to the Department's official web site.
 - (3) Department social media accounts shall refer to the City's Official Social Media Terms of Use.
 - (4) Social media page/s shall be designed for the target audience/s such as youth, potential police recruits, media, target communities, or the community as a whole.
 - (5) Use of social media should not promote a single individual's interests except where those interests also serve the Department as a whole and **only** when the Department has specifically authorized the promotion of that individual's interests.
 - (6) Department personnel authorized to use social media must manage the posts they make on their pages as well as any comments made and/or deleted on their pages.
 - Refer to the City's Records Retentions Schedule for detailed information regarding records maintenance and handling.
 - (7) When using any form of media or social media on duty, in an official capacity, or as a representative of the Department, employees must adhere to all state laws governing the release of information and records.
 - (8) As public employees, Department personnel are cautioned that work-related speech (any speech made pursuant to their official duties and owing its existence to the employee's professional duties and responsibilities) receives much less protection under the First Amendment than purely personal speech and may form the basis for discipline if the speech is deemed detrimental to the Department.

5. **DEFINITIONS**

A. Blog	A self-published diary or commentary on a particular topic that may allow visitors to post responses, reactions, or comments. The term is short for "Web log."
B. Comment	A remark in text or video expressing an opinion or reaction to information presented on a web page such as in response to a news article or other post

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5. **DEFINITIONS** (continued)

C. Data Extraction	The process of finding and extracting useful data from various social media and internet related sources. This is often used as an investigative tool as suspects often post information about their crimes on social media web sites.
D. Follow	Means you will receive updates and other information pushed out through that social media platform. For example, following someone on Twitter means you will see their tweets (Twitter updates) in your personal timeline. Followers are people who receive other people's updates.
E. Off Duty	Any time an employee is not on duty as defined in 4.F below (also defined in Operations Order 1.2.00 Definitions)
F. On Duty	Any time an employee is actively engaged in the performance of regularly assigned duties, when in the performance of a special mission for the Department, or when involved in any incident requiring the employee to act in the capacity of a police officer (also defined in Operations Order 1.2.00 Definitions)
G. Page	The specific portion of a social media website where content is displayed and managed by an individual or individuals with administrator rights
H. Post	Content an individual shares on a social media site or the act of publishing content on a site. Profile: Information that a user provides about himself or herself on a social networking site.
I. Re-Tweet	To repost another user's message on the social networking website Twitter
J. Social Media	A category of internet-based resources that integrate user-generated content and user participation. This includes, but is not limited to, social networking sites (Facebook, MySpace, Google+), microblogging sites (Twitter, Nixle, Instagram), photo and video sharing sites (Flickr, YouTube, Snapchat, TikTok), blogs, and news sites (Digg, Reddit). Social Networks: Online platforms where users can create profiles, share information, share files, share videos, share video clips, and socialize with others using a range of technologies.
K. Social Networking	The development of social and professional contacts; the sharing of information and services among people with a common interest
L. Speech	Expression or communication of thoughts or opinions in spoken words, in writing, by expressive conduct, symbolism, photographs, videotape, or related forms of communication
M. Tweet	A posted message on the social networking website Twitter
N. Vlog	Similar to blog except it is presented as a video instead of text
O. Web Page	See 5.G above
P. Web Site	A site (location) on the world wide web (www). Each web site contains a home page, which is the first document users see when they enter the site. The site might also contain additional documents and files. Each site is owned and managed by an individual, company or organization. This is a broadly used term generically covering the various social media sites as well as news, information, and other similarly organized locations on the world wide web.
Q. Wiki	Web page/s that can be edited collaboratively. Wikipedia is a well known example but wiki can be dedicated to any topic.

6. **PUBLIC AFFAIRS AND EMPLOYMENT SERVICES BUREAU USE**

- A. Official social media designees who are authorized to use social media on behalf of the Department must use Department-issued, City-issued, or authorized personal devices when posting, commenting, or engaging in any type of social networking.
 - The use of unauthorized personal devices is strictly prohibited.
- B. Social media can be used for community outreach and engagement by:
 - Providing crime prevention tips (burglary prevention, Block Watch, drowning, drug awareness, etc.)
 - Offering online-reporting opportunities
 - Sharing crime maps and data
 - Soliciting tips about unsolved crimes (Silent Witness)

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6. C. Social media can be used to make time-sensitive notifications related to:
 - Road closures
 - Special events (community meetings, Coffee with a Cop, press conferences)
 - Weather emergencies (monsoon, dust, heat, etc.)
 - Missing or endangered persons
 - Police incidents that might affect the surrounding community
 - D. Social media can be used for any other Department related information of general interest to the community, such as:
 - Commander rotations
 - Changes to precincts (boundaries, additions, events)
 - Awards and commendations or other positive recognition received by the Department or employees that reflects well on the organization as a whole
 - Line of duty incidents
 - E. Other authorized use of social media can be:
 - (1) Those units authorized by PAB to use social media for community outreach and engagement are limited to the following:
 - Special events (community meetings, Coffee with a Cop, G.A.I.N., etc.)
 - Non-criminal traffic related incidents (road closures due to non-criminal related accidents, downed power lines, etc.)
 - Weather emergencies (monsoon, dust, heat etc.)
 - F. Social Media can be used for recruitment and hiring events under the direction of the Training Bureau Commander.
7. **INVESTIGATIVE USE**
- A. Social media is a valuable investigative tool when seeking evidence or information about:
 - Missing persons
 - Wanted persons
 - Gang participation
 - Graffiti
 - Crimes perpetrated online (cyber-bullying, cyber-stalking, fraud, etc.)
 - Photos or videos of a crime posted by a participant or observer.
 - B. Social media use by investigators of a public nature must be approved by the PAB Administrator or authorized designee. Social media use of an investigative or undercover nature must receive prior approval through the precinct/bureau commander/administrator.
 - C. Social media use not of a public nature (data extraction, undercover work) must comply with [Operations Order 5.3.00.10.B](#) related to using the internet as an investigative tool. For example, if an investigator wished to use the Department's social media presence to request information about a crime from the community, it requires approval from the PAB Administrator or authorized designee. However, if an investigator wishes to use a social media site to obtain evidence of a crime through investigative work, it does not.
 - D. Employees are prohibited from using personal cell phones or any personally owned recording device of any type, other than those pre-approved by the Department, to record, upload, transfer, or share crime scene photographs or any other items of evidence obtained in the course of their duties, except in furtherance of an authorized departmental criminal or internal investigation.

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7. E. Employees are reminded all personal electronic devices used on duty and/or in an official capacity may be subject to review, subpoena, discovery, public records requests, and/or impound for possible evidentiary value.

8. **PERSONAL USE**

A. General Guidelines

- (1) Department personnel are cautioned their speech and related activity on social media sites may be considered a reflection upon their position, and, in some instances, this Department.
- (2) When using social media, Department personnel should be mindful their speech becomes part of the worldwide electronic domain. Therefore, adherence to City and Department policies is required in the personal use of social media.
- (3) The Department must maintain the trust and confidence of the public to provide effective law enforcement services.
 - (a) Department personnel must consider their actions to avoid damaging the reputation and trust the Department has with the community.
- (4) Department employees have qualified First Amendment and free speech rights.
 - (a) As public employees, speech, on- or off-duty may form the basis for discipline if it erodes public trust in the Department, impairs relationships between employees, or is detrimental to the efficiency of operations.
 - (b) Personal social media activity must not interfere with work duties or the operation of the Department.
- (5) The Department recognizes that certain speech is protected under the United States and Arizona Constitutions.
 - (a) The Department will balance an employee's First Amendment rights against the actual or reasonably anticipated impact of the employee's speech on operations, public trust, and close working relationships.
 - (b) The Department will consider whether the employee's speech impairs discipline by superiors or harmony among co-workers; has a detrimental impact on close working relationships; or impedes the performance of the employee's duties or interferes with the regular operation of the Department.
- (6) For safety and security reasons, Department personnel are cautioned not to disclose their employment with this Department. As such, Department personnel are cautioned not to:
 - Display Department logos, uniforms, or similar identifying items on personal web pages.
 - Post personal photographs or provide similar means of personal recognition that may cause them to be identified as an employee of this Department.
- (7) Department personnel should be aware privacy settings and social media sites are constantly in flux, and they should never assume that personal information posted on such sites is protected. Personnel are reminded even the strongest privacy settings cannot prevent an approved "friend" or authorized recipient from independently choosing to forward or re-post the information worldwide.

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8. A. (8) Department personnel should expect any information created, transmitted, downloaded, exchanged, or discussed in a public online forum may be accessed by the Department at any time without prior notice.

- (9) Employees have no expectation of privacy for any personal communications or information sent or received via the City's network or City devices

B. Restrictions on Social Media Use by Department Personnel

- (1) Employees are responsible for their social media postings.

NOTE: If an employee's social media postings are found to be in violation of any City or Department policy, this may form the basis for corrective action or discipline.

- (2) Employees may not use social media to harass, discriminate, bully, taunt, or retaliate.

- This includes posting, displaying, or transmitting disparaging comments or retaliation against individuals who have engaged in protected activity.

- (3) Because the public must have confidence in the Department to enforce the law fairly and without bias, employees are prohibited from posting speech that ridicules, disparages, or otherwise promotes discrimination, harassment, or acts of violence against any person or group based upon race, color, national origin, religion, gender, sexual orientation, disability, genetic information, or any other protected category under the law.

- (4) Employees are prohibited from posting content that promotes, encourages, or approves of criminal activity, unlawful violence, or vigilantism.

- (5) The Department has a strong interest in ensuring investigations are conducted without undue influence or interference. As such, employees are prohibited from posting any information or commenting about ongoing criminal, or administrative investigations, without prior approval from their Commander/Administrator.

- This does not prohibit reporting allegations of criminal conduct when there is a good faith, reasonable belief of illegal activity.

- (6) Use of the City's network for personal purposes to the extent that such use compromises security or impedes City business in any manner, including a decrease in employee productivity, may subject the employee to disciplinary measures up to and including termination.

- (7) Employees who work in undercover operations shall not post any form of visual or personal identification.

- (8) Department personnel are free to express themselves as private citizens on social media sites as long as their speech does not impair working relationships of this Department; disrupt the Department; undermine respect or public confidence in the Department or undermine the goals and mission of the Department or City.

- (9) Unless prior authorization is granted by the Department, **employees may not divulge confidential information gained solely in the performance of their official duties.** This includes but is not limited to information restricted from disclosure by law or Department policies or that may reveal tactical strategies, planned law enforcement operations, or the identity of any undercover officer or confidential informant.

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8. B. (10) Unless prior authorization is granted by the Department, employees may not make any statements, speeches, appearances, and endorsements where the employee is acting or appearing to act in an official capacity or as an official representative of the Department or City, or publish materials that could reasonably be considered to represent the views or positions of this Department.

9. **RELATED POLICIES, STANDARDS, AND PROCEDURES**

- [AR 1.61 – Records Management Program](#)
- [AR 1.63 – Electronic Communications and Internet Acceptable Use](#)
- [AR 1.90 – Information Privacy and Protection](#)
- [AR 1.92 – City Presence on the Internet](#)
- [AR 1.95 – Privacy Program](#)
- [AR 2.16 – Employee Political Activity](#)
- [AR 2.35 – Equal Opportunity Policy: Anti-Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation](#)
- [AR 2.38 – Social Media and Networking](#)
- [AR 2.99 – Respect and Civility in the Workplace](#)
- Information Technology Standard (s) 1.2.1 – Requesting Access to Blocked Web Sites
- s1.10 – Collaborative Web Technologies Usage

Last Organizational Review:

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